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TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [MEDIA](#) [REACTION](#)
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION IRAN-IAEA-ARGENTINA, GLOBAL
OUTRAGE OVER MUHAMMAD CARTOONS, HAMAS; BUENOS AIRES
02/07/06

[1](#)1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Papers continue to lead with the Iran case at the IAEA, with France and Russia seeking to stop the escalation against Tehran, and Argentina's public stance on the up-coming vote at the UNSC; the growing violence between the Muslim world and the West, following the publication of Muhammad's cartoons and Hamas' allegedly remarkable opportunity to bridge the deep differences between Israel and Palestine.

[1](#)2. OPINION PIECES AND KEY STORIES

- "Discussing Iran"

Leftist "Pagina 12" says (02/07) "Argentina's Ambassador to the UN, Cesar Mayoral, assured that Argentina 'won't necessarily side' with the U.S. next month when voting on the Iran case at the UNSC. 'Prior to the vote, we will discuss the IAEA's final report and what we will do with Iran's nuclear program, but we won't necessarily align ourselves with the U.S. because this is not a problem between two countries,' said Mayoral. From New York, the diplomat also charged against the 'political side of aligning with the U.S., or against Venezuela,' by saying 'what we're debating here only has to do with the use of nuclear energy for purposes that are not peaceful,' he said."

- "Argentina, Without a Defined Position"

Center-right, daily-of-record "La Nacion" says (02/07) ".... Ambassador Mayoral said 'We won't decide anything until we read the IAEA report; Argentina will first analyze the report, listen to what is said in Vienna and, from there, discuss future actions, which is another issue,' said Mayoral."

- "Russia and France Want to Stop Escalation of War Against Iran"

Maria Laura Avignolo, centrist, leading "Clarín" Paris-based correspondent, writes (02/07) ".... France joined Russia in its search for a negotiated solution and urged Tehran 'to cooperate' with the international community.

".... Iran replied that 'IAEA inspectors will come to Tehran in the next few days'...

"Iran's response appears amid confusing declarations within Tehran's government, where some officials refer to the ban on IAEA's untimely inspections to Iran's installations and others mention the up-coming visit of these UN officials to the nuclear plants.

"Some foreign diplomats in Tehran perceive a clear division in the administration: President Ahmadinejad is supported in his defiant declarations by the Guards of the Revolution and the secret service, while the Foreign Ministry seems to be trying to find a conciliatory line, before the UNSC meeting in March, when it needs to obtain votes to counteract possible sanctions.

".... Regardless of certain challenging declarations, Iran is leaving the door open to diplomacy...."

- "Reactions"

Marcelo Cantelmi, centrist, leading "Clarín" international editor, opines (02/07) "The outrage of the Muslim world following Denmark's publication of Muhammad's cartoons is an exuberant overreaction. But that obvious issue doesn't justify the less dogmatic position of a good portion of the Western world. The publication of those cartoons was made without taking into consideration the conflictive scenario in the Muslim world due to the war in Iraq, the Palestinian dead-end or the 'demonization' of Islam. The West is seriously responsible for that, like it was when it fostered the growth of Islamic leaders in the region to block the USSR during the Cold War, or it wove alliances with Bin Laden or Saddam. Therefore, Fundamentalism has many fathers. This is why the publication of the cartoons appears like an

unnecessary and puerile provocation rather than a sensible exercise of freedom of the press."

- "A Rift That Grows Day by Day"

Eduardo Febbro, leftist "Pagina 12" Paris-based correspondent, writes (02/07) ".... The crisis sparked by the publication of the cartoons in a Denmark daily acquired a proportion that's out of control.

".... According to observers, the 'cartoon crisis' led to a political issue of major proportions that goes beyond controversy.

"European leaders believe that the publication by several other dailies only 'added fuel to the initial insult.' Nothing indicates today that 'the offense' will tone down. Those responsible in the EU don't know what to do in order to calm down the tension and prevent the crisis from being used as a component to spread hatred towards the Western world, in a context that's already marked by a division between the Muslim world and Western countries, with the backdrop of three conflicts: the invasion of Iraq, the war in Afghanistan and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Gathered in Brussels for an urgent meeting, representatives of the 25 EU members called for 'peace and dialogue.'..."

- "Hamás, a Formidable Opportunity"

Political analyst Vicente Massot, writes in center-right, daily-of-record "La Nación" (02/07) ".... No matter how controversial we view it, Hamas' victory doesn't necessarily have to be ominous. Moreover: it might be an encouragement to negotiate the enmity of both sides which, I may add, won't disappear in the region by magic. Let's be honest: the present situation has nothing to do with poverty in the world, the U.S. invasion of Iraq or the absence of democratic

traditions in the Arab world. In fact, what we must bear in mind is the existence of a war that, without a solution in sight, has spread since the creation of the State of Israel; the presence of two enemies, apparently irreconcilable, and the fundamental role that the U.S. - as only superpower -- might play as ultimate guarantor of Israel's security.

".... Today, the important issue is that Hamas is co-ruling and knows, better than anyone, that the Jewish army may easily occupy the Western bank, without eliminating the Palestinian claim, and also the asymmetry in terms of power is so important that Israel may, at the same time, maintain the present status quo for decades.

".... Those who believed that after Arafat's death, the only obstacle to reach peace had disappeared and that his successor Abu Mazen would be the ideal interlocutor, were far from being right. The only interlocutor capable of bridging the huge differences between these belligerent players is Hamas, more so after its victory in the elections. Basically, because it has the necessary power to negotiate and meet its commitments...."

13. EDITORIALS

- "Correct Steps in Foreign Policy"

An editorial in center-right, daily-of-record "La Nacion" reads (02/07) "Argentina's decision to side with the vote of the majority of the countries that are part of the IAEA board to take the Iran case to the UNSC, was correct.

"In view of the ratification of its nuclear plan by Tehran's theocratic regime - which means more instability in the volatile Middle East region and represents a threat to global peace - our country acted seriously, siding with the nations that want to investigate the true reasons for Iran's program.

"By doing this, the Kirchner administration seems to have made a correct evaluation of its foreign policy strategy, to separate the ideological and biased vote

of Cuba and Venezuela...

"In this context, we must celebrate Argentina's rapprochement with the U.S. after the abrupt retreat and cooling in bilateral relations, due to the public differences clearly expressed at the Summit of the Americas.

".... Good relations with key countries don't have to be equal to submission. Instead, they must be a policy marked by seriousness, respect and autonomy in the key decisions of the Republic.

"....Despite the differences in criteria, there are many issues of mutual interest that Argentina has with the U.S., which need to be reinforced, such as the future of Bolivia in the hands of its new leader, Evo Morales, the growing confrontation between Venezuela and Washington, the present and future of Haiti and, at a global level, Iran's nuclear crisis.

"Vis--vis this critical issue that jeopardizes global stability, our country presented a firm position that must be underscored.

".... Argentina's recent steps in foreign policy must be highlighted, because they bring the country closer to moderate and reasonable positions, which may again lead it to become a reference when making key decisions for the future of the region and the world."

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